



# Street Stories

## Manzer Street

GPS: [49.1690708,-122.3960756](#)

Little is known of John Oscar Manzer's early days save his birth year, 1854, and the fact that he was adopted. However, we do know that he married Eva Gilmour, a Scottish immigrant, sometime around 1879.

The couple lived in Ontario and would eventually have eight children: Ernest, Charles, Jennie, Robert, Howard, Alex, Archie, and Alice. In 1888, the young family came west and established a homestead at Silverdale. Here John built a house and eventually established a farm, growing fruit, and berries and raising cattle. While clearing his land, John earned a



*Eva and John Manzer with four of their children standing on cedar bolts ready to be split into shingles, 1920.*

*Mission Community Archives 0225-191-11A*

livelihood from logging and through his sawmill operations on Stave Lake.

A man of some prominence in the community, John was appointed tax-collector in 1895, with a commission of 4%. He also served on municipal council from 1900 to 1908. One of his many contributions was spearheading the establishment of policies directing how mills could use local creeks to power their operations without interfering with local water supplies. He also donated gravel and timber from his land to build roads.

John's granddaughter, Evelyn Neid, recalls that he was an austere man who had little time for children. She has fond memories of her grandmother Eva, who taught her to knit. "She was an excellent, motherly woman," recalls Evelyn.

Eva indeed was as her granddaughter described her. Concerned about her children's education, she travelled to Victoria and sat on the steps of the Legislature lobbying for a school in Silverdale. Hence, in 1892, thanks in part to Eva, the first Silverdale school was built at the corner of Cooper and Silverdale roads. In order to meet the 10-student minimum, it was necessary for three kids to be rowed across the Fraser River from Mt Lehman. Of the 10, four were Manzners.

Most of the Manzners' children moved out of Mission during the course of their lives. However, their son Howard who was an educator ended up teaching in Mission, retiring in 1955 after 10 years. Highly regarded by students, the '55 School Annual was dedicated to Howard.

Manzer Street passes through the land of the original homestead and offers wonderful views of the Fraser and beyond.

Street Stories is provided by the Mission Community Archives, which is operated by the Mission Historical Society. If you have any questions or further information on the Manzer family, please call us at 604-820-2621.

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